

CLAIMS

- 1 1. A method of sending a video segment and an associated advertisement over a
2 computer network, comprising:
 - 3 (a) acquiring a video segment at a computer system;
 - 4 (b) acquiring one or more advertisements at the computer system;
 - 5 (c) offering to a sender an opportunity to indicate a selection of an advertisement
6 of the one or more advertisements to be associated with the video segment;
 - 7 (d) accepting from the sender the indication of a selection of the advertisement to
8 be associated with the video segment, the video segment and the
9 advertisement to be sent over the computer network; and
10 (e) in response to the indication accepted in step (d), automatically at the
11 computer system:
 - 12 (i) assuring that the video segment is in a streaming video format;
 - 13 (ii) creating an identifier for the video segment;
 - 14 (iii) associating the video segment and the advertisement; and
 - 15 (iv) sending the video segment, the identifier, and the associated
16 advertisement over the computer network to a receiving computer
17 system.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of offering to a sender an opportunity to
2 indicate a selection of an advertisement of the one or more advertisements includes a
3 criterion selectable by the sender.

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1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein said criterion is one of a subject of the advertisement,
2 a length of the advertisement, and a remuneration paid for selecting the
3 advertisement.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein said criterion includes affirmatively leaving the
2 selection to the determination of said server computer system.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of offering to a sender an opportunity to
2 indicate a selection of an advertisement of the one or more advertisements includes a
3 default selection to be made if the sender fails to indicate a selection.

1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the default selection includes a substantially
2 randomized selection of an advertisement.

1 7. A method of sending a video segment and an associated advertisement over a
2 computer network, comprising:

3 (a) uploading a video segment from a sender computer system to a server
4 computer system;

5 (b) selecting, using the sender computer system, an advertisement stored at the
6 server computer system; and

7 (c) transmitting from the sender computer an indication of an intent to send the
8 video segment and the advertisement over the computer network, the
9 indication causing the server computer system automatically to:

- 10 (i) assure that the video segment is in a streaming video format;
11 (ii) create an identifier for the video segment;
12 (iii) associate the video segment and the advertisement; and
13 (iv) send the video segment, the identifier, and the associated
14 advertisement over the computer network to a receiving computer
15 system.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein selecting an advertisement comprises selecting an
2 advertisement using a criterion chosen by an operator of the sender computer system.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said criterion is one of a subject of the advertisement,
2 a length of the advertisement, and a remuneration paid for selecting said
3 advertisement.

1 10. The method of claim 8, wherein said criterion includes leaving said selection to the
2 determination of said server computer system.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein said selection includes a substantially randomized
2 selection of an advertisement.

1 12. The method of claim 10, wherein said selection is based on a price paid by an
2 advertiser.

1 13. A system for sending a video and an associated advertisement over a computer
2 network , comprising:

3 (a) a first computer system for connection to other computer systems over a
4 computer network, the first computer system including:

5 (1) a first module operating on the first computer system for acquiring a video
6 segment;

7 (2) a second module operating on the first computer system for generating an
8 identifier associated with the video segment;

9 (3) a third module operating on the first computer system for accepting an
10 indication of intent to send the video segment to another computer;

11 (4) a fourth module operating on the first computer system for automatically
12 sending the video segment and the identifier over the computer network to
13 a receiving computer; and

14 (5) a fifth module operating on the first computer system for accepting from a
15 sender an indication of an advertisement to be associated with the video
16 segment and for transmitting the indication to another computer; and

17 (b) a second computer system comprising storage and for connection to other
18 computer systems over the computer network, the second computer system
19 including:

- 20 (6) a sixth module operating on the second computer system for automatically
21 receiving the video segment and its associated identifier sent by the first
22 computer system over the computer network;
- 23 (7) a seventh module operating on the second computer system for storing an
24 advertisement;
- 25 (8) an eighth module operating on the second computer system for associating
26 the advertisement with the video segment;
- 27 (9) a ninth module operating on the second computer system for storing the
28 video segment and associated identifier in the storage;
- 29 (10) a tenth module operating on the second computer system for receiving
30 an indication to associate the stored video segment and the advertisement;
- 31 (11) an eleventh module operating on the second computer system for
32 automatically assuring that the video segment is in a streaming video
33 format; and
- 34 (12) a twelfth module operating on the second computer system for sending
35 the video segment, the identifier, and the associated advertisement from
36 the storage to a receiver computer system.

1 14. The system of claim 13, further comprising:

- 2 (13) a thirteenth module operating on the second computer system for
3 determining a price to be charged for one or more of storing said
4 advertisement, associating said advertisement with said video segment,

5 and sending said video segment, said identifier, and said associated
6 advertisement from said storage to said receiver computer system.

1 15. The system of claim 14, wherein said module determines the price based on a number
2 of transmissions of said video and said associated advertisement multiplied by a rate
3 of charge per transmission.

1 16. The system of claim 15, wherein said rate of charge is based on one of a type of
2 video, a length of said video, and a quality of said video.

1 17. The system of claim 14, wherein said module determines the price based on a fixed
2 price.

1 18. The system of claim 14, wherein said module determines the price based on a
2 percentage of a sales amount incurred in response to said advertisement.

1 19. The system of claim 13, further comprising a module operating on the second
2 computer system for obtaining from a user of said first computer an indication of
3 which advertisement is to be associated with the video sent by the first computer.

1 20. The system of claim 19, wherein said module for obtaining an indication of which
2 advertisement is to be associated with the video uses a criterion for said association.

1 21. The system of claim 20, wherein said criterion is one of a subject of the
2 advertisement, a length of the advertisement, and a remuneration paid for selecting
3 said advertisement.

1 22. The system of claim 19, wherein said module for obtaining an indication of which
2 advertisement is to be associated with the video uses a criterion for said association
3 that includes leaving said selection to the determination of said server computer.

1 23. The system of claim 22, wherein said selection includes a substantially randomized
2 selection of an advertisement.

1 24. The system of claim 13, further comprising:
2 (14) a fourteenth module operating on the second computer system for
3 determining whether an operator of the receiver computer system is
4 present during the presentation of the advertisement.

1 25. The system of claim 13, further comprising:

2 (c) a third computer system for connection to other computer systems over a

3 computer network, the third computer system including:

4 (15) a fifteenth module operating on the third computer system for

5 determining whether an operator of the receiver computer system is

6 present during the presentation of the advertisement.

1 26. The system of claim 25, wherein said fifteenth module for determining whether an
2 operator of the receiver computer system is present during the presentation of the
3 advertisement comprises:
4 a module that causes the display of the advertisement to pause; and
5 a module that senses if an action is performed by the viewer of said advertisement.

1 27. The system of claim 26, wherein said module that senses if an action is performed by
2 the viewer of said advertisement senses one of a button activation, a switch activation,
3 an activation of a pointing device, a response to a prompt, and a physical response of
4 the viewer.

1 28. The system of claim 27, wherein said prompt is in the form of a question.

1 29. The system of claim 27, wherein said physical response of the viewer is one of a
2 voluntary action and a physiological response.

1 30. The system of claim 26, further comprising:
2 a module that determines what events will transpire in response to said action by
3 the viewer.

1 31. The system of claim 30, wherein said module that determines what events will
2 transpire in response to said action by the viewer causes the commencement or

3 resumption, as appropriate, of the display of one of the advertisement and the video
4 segment.

32. The system of claim 30, wherein said module that determines what events will transpire in response to said action by the viewer causes one of the advertisement and the video segment to terminate.

33. The system of claim 30, wherein said module that determines what events will transpire in response to said action by the viewer causes a predetermined response to occur if the viewer fails to take action within a predefined time interval.

1 34. The system of claim 30, further comprising:
2 a module that reports one of the action of the viewer and the time of the action to
3 the second computer.

1 35. The system of claim 13, further comprising:
2 (16) a sixteenth module operating on the second computer system for
3 determining a payment to be made to one of a sender of an advertisement
4 associated with a video segment and a viewer of the advertisement.